



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Oct. 25, 2007**

**For immediate release**

- 1. Officials on scene of paint spill near Iowa City**
- 2. City of Wapello to eliminate combined sewer system**
- 3. Permitting workshops for grain handling facilities begin Nov. 14**

## **OFFICIALS ON SCENE OF PAINT SPILL NEAR IOWA CITY**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Terry Jones, (319) 653-8063, or Alan Foster, (515) 210-6435**

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Corrects original release of 42,000 pounds of material instead of 62,000 pounds**

IOWA CITY – Clean-up has begun in Iowa City following a semi truck accident Tuesday that spilled 42,000 pounds of paint material into a small tributary of the Iowa River.

The material, paint chips and paint resin destined for Des Moines from Davenport, is being pumped into a manhole that leads to the city's sanitary sewer system. Authorities expect the process to take 24 to 48 hours to complete. State environmental officials are investigating the chemical properties of the product, but the Material Safety Data Sheet indicates it poses no decomposition hazard.

The accident was reported to state environmental officials around 1:53 p.m. Tuesday. It happened near mile marker 244 of westbound Interstate 80, just outside Iowa City. Workers initially dammed the spill, which reportedly did not hold overnight. The material was dammed again near a green space just off the interstate, where it is currently being redirected to the city's sewer system.

Officials were initially concerned the material could reach the downstream Iowa River.

“Our primary concern was to keep it from reaching the Iowa River,” said Terry Jones, an environmental specialist with the Iowa DNR.

The driver was transported to University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City. His condition and name was unknown.

The accident and spill is still under investigation.

*Writer: Alan Foster*

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## **CITY OF WAPELLO TO ELIMINATE COMBINED SEWER SYSTEM**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Dennis Ostwinkle or Paul Brandt, Washington DNR Field Office, (319) 653-2135.**

WAPELLO – The City of Wapello has signed a consent order to separate its combined sanitary and storm water sewer system, making a major commitment to reduce wastewater in the Iowa River.

A combined sewer system allows runoff from rainfall to enter and overwhelm the sanitary sewer system. When that happens, the city’s sewer system is not capable of handling the volume of wastewater and runoff. Consequently, untreated wastewater is diverted to the river.

“This agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is the first of its kind in the state and shows the city’s dedication to improve water quality,” said Rich Leopold, director of the DNR.

“We recognize the importance of local governments’ actions to protect Iowa’s waters,” he added. “And, we want to congratulate the city for working with our field office staff and taking the steps necessary to prevent untreated sewage from entering the Iowa River.”

The cost of the project could exceed \$3 million according to the city engineer. Once the systems have been separated, runoff from rainfall will enter the storm water sewer and discharge directly to a stream, river or lake because it does not require treatment.

Engineering and construction to separate the storm and sanitary combined sewers is expected to take about 13 years to complete. Major construction at the Van Buren pumping station should be completed by Sept. 1, 2014. Work at the Vernon Street pumping station should be completed by Sept. 1, 2020.

“This is the first time that Iowa has signed an agreement with a city to separate its combined sewers,” said Dennis Ostwinkle, supervisor of the DNR’s southeast Iowa field office. The agreement was finalized on Oct. 19.

The City of Muscatine has signed a similar agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Seven more Iowa cities have combined sewer systems that need to be separated. They include Burlington, Clinton, Des Moines, Spencer, Keokuk, Fort Madison and Ottumwa.

More information about combined sewer overflows can be found on the U.S. EPA’s Web site at [http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program\\_id=5](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=5).

*Writer: Karen Grimes*

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## **PERMITTING WORKSHOPS FOR GRAIN HANDLING FACILITIES BEGIN NOVEMBER 14**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Jim McGraw, Supervisor, Program Development (515) 242-5167**

DES MOINES — Workshops to assist grain handling facilities in complying with new air regulations and ensuring continued protection of human health near grain elevators will be held around the state beginning Wednesday, Nov. 14 in Spencer. The requirements of grain terminals and country grain elevators will be discussed in separate workshops.

Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Agribusiness Association of Iowa (AAI), the University of Northern Iowa and the Iowa Department of Economic Development, workshop leaders will provide an overview of the new grain elevator air construction permitting requirements, help facilities calculate their air pollutant emissions, and discuss tools and techniques for reporting air pollutant emissions.

Workshop attendees are encouraged to bring an equipment list with maximum equipment capacities, a list of air pollution control equipment in use at the facility, and annual facility grain throughput.

Workshops are also planned in Ames, Mason City, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and Ottumwa. The reservation deadline is Nov. 1. Call Joan O’Brien, AAI, at 1-800-383-1682 for more information or go to [www.agribiz.org](http://www.agribiz.org) and read information under “Air Quality Permitting Workshops.” You do not have to be a member of AAI to attend. The registration fee is \$15 and must be paid by check to AAI, 900 Des Moines St., Des Moines, IA 50309.

*Writer: Mindy Kralicek*